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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
150 Broadway
New York 7, N.Y.

... "THE AGRICULTURAL FRONT" ...

(For Immediate Broadcast)

March...1945

It's March on the "Agricultural Front". And blustery March is observing tradition by coming in like a lion. Whether it will exit like a lamb is anybody's guess...But I've got some items for you today that aren't just guesswork. I'd like to tell you about the War Food Administration's aids for farm production...the fertilizer situation, some information about farm equipment, and time permits, I'll repeat a note or two about fat salvage.

First, let me begin with three very important actions that were taken recently by the War Food Administration. They fit right in with a statement by War Food Administrator Marvin Jones. Here's what Judge Jones said: "There is need for all of the meat and milk and vegetables and grains and dozens of other foods that the nation's farms can produce."

Those three actions are designed to encourage the production of food. First, if it becomes necessary to support the market for eggs, the WFA will purchase shell eggs on the basis of 27 cents a dozen to the producer for candled eggs. If the producer doesn't have any way to candle his eggs, the War Food Administration will stand ready to purchase eggs from farmers at 24 cents a dozen...straight run.

Second, the national goal for vegetables for processing, which was announced last Fall, has been increased by 145,000 acres. And support prices for those vegetables have been increased over the previously established prices.

The 1945 support prices are as follows: Green peas, at a national average of \$83.50 a ton; Sweet corn, at \$18.00 a ton; Tomatoes at \$23.25, and Snap beans at \$85.00 dollars. These prices are on a field run basis for vegetables delivered to the canner's plant or any assembly point that's customarily been used by growers and canners.

The third WFA action has to do with milk. The dairy production payments for the months of April through December have been adjusted in a way that will give dairy farmers about the same average rate of payment on whole milk in 1945 as in 1944; and farmers will receive a substantially higher rate on butterfat in cream. The changes will encourage greater production of butter. The exact rates vary by the season...and by regions so I won't give them here. Those rates for any county can be obtained from the County Triple "A" office.

In announcing the new rates, Judge Jones pointed out that the continuation of the dairy payment after June 30th of this year depends upon approval by Congress...and that the rates of payment after June 30th may be changed if a sharp change in the war picture alters military requirements.

The support of farm prices is not the only way in which the Government tries to increase food production. One of the very important lines of endeavor is making farm equipment supplies meet the needs of farmers all over the country. I'd like to tell you something about the prospects for equipment in 1945...

The situation is tight. The emphasis is more and more on military production...So, although some new machines will be produced, to permit the essential replacement of some implements on some farms...there won't be enough of the new machines to enable you to replace any equipment it can serve another season.

If current production schedules are met, the new machinery available for 1945 would just about equal the amount available last year.

Unfortunately, however, production is running behind schedule. And, as I said before this is largely due to the high level of military requirements. The production of wheel tractors is about on schedule... although the total authorized for this year is smaller than last year's actual production. And efforts are being made to get the production of other machinery up to schedule...but here again, materials and manpower are short...and there's no solution in view of large military needs.

The production of repair parts is expected to be very large again this year. Last year, there was a record supply. And the government continued the policy of encouraging production by authorizing materials without quota restrictions. Some parts of some of the older machines won't be available. But in general, farmers can expect to have enough parts to keep their machines in repair. One way to help this state of affairs along, is to check your machinery carefully before you use it...and do that consistently.

Both trucks and truck tires will be scarce. And that means you'll have to conserve them very carefully, too. Some light trucks will be made available to farmers for the first time in the war...but on the whole, the farm transportation problem is going to be very much in evidence... and the solution of your individual problem will depend on careful maintenance. Of course, it's almost impossible to tell whether available equipment will be adequate to your needs. That depends very much on the weather, and on the manpower situation. So the only way to judge this is on the basis of experience.

Actually farmers in 1945 have more machinery and equipment than ever before...including more horsepower units. Of course, some of this equipment is growing less and less efficient...and it normally would have been replaced before now. But last year, in many places, that old equipment went a long way to help overcome the effects of unfavorable planting weather. Naturally this doesn't prove that more equipment is not needed. But it does prove that not every tight squeeze spells disaster.

And now, I'd like to tell you some of the up-to-the-minute facts about other farm production supplies.

Let's begin with insecticides. Rotenone, pyrethrum, and nicotine will be in short supply again this year. That means that you'll have to substitute one chemical for the other to protect your crops against pests. In order to make the insecticides go as far as possible, it's best to keep a careful eye out for infestation...and get right to work controlling it.

Textiles used in production will be in short supply. Wooden containers and bags will be very short...So conservation...and re-use are the only hope of having enough. If you use bags, sell the used ones you don't need to local dealers. If you use wooden containers...place your order early for second-hand containers.

And now, here's a note about the fertilizer situation. The War Food Administration Fertilizer Industry Advisory Committee met recently in Washington. At the meeting, the Committee reported that farmers can still improve the situation by buying and accepting delivery of their fertilizer supplies immediately.

Representatives of the fertilizer industry reported that manpower shortages have greatly complicated the job of converting all available fertilizer material into usable form in time for use by farmers this year. If farmers will accept deliveries immediately, they will help the industry meet its problem.

The committee also expressed the opinion that the nation would use about the same total amount of fertilizer this year as last...and would use more if supplies of fertilizer materials were larger.

So in order to be sure of having enough fertilizer to meet your needs, remember to order your supplies and accept delivery immediately.

Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard paid tribute to the wonderful wartime production record of dairy farmers in his address to the annual banquet of the Elkhart County Dairy Association at Goshen Indiana last week. He said, "Production of milk powder (and of all the essential milk products) is almost as important to the final Victory as production of gunpowder".

"The needs of our own fighting men, and those of our allies, and of civilian families in this and other countries, have been, and still are tremendous. The way in which dairy farmers of this country have responded to those needs is amazing and inspiring".

In summary, Secretary Wickard said: "...the post war prospects for this Nation's farmers are bright, provided we find a way to use all of our great capacity to produce".

And now here are some important things to remember...until April rolls around on the "Agricultural Front"...First, our food needs are increasing constantly...and military needs are larger than ever. The Government is doing what it can to aid production of the food so vital to Victory. You can do your part, too, by conserving equipment and supplies. That means checking all machinery regularly, and keeping it in good working order...it means using and reusing bags and containers, ordering supplies early, and accepting early deliveries. That way, you can help to make Food Fight For Freedom!

